



November, 2023



Gleanings

I love the month of November and not just because it is my birth month and the month that Lyndie and I chose for our wedding. No, I love November because it marks a very important time in the year. In November, we get to finish whatever we have been working on to get ready to start a new year. December is filled with so many celebrations and parties that you really cannot find closure for events and tasks. And you get to end the month with a feast of Thanksgiving. It is, to me, a proper ending to another year of work, play, struggling, succeeding, and whatever else the year may have asked of you.

What do we do when we cannot close out the year? I believe that we look to November and take a cue from nature. Many, if not most, of the plants and trees in our area go dormant this time of year. Temperature and reduced levels of sunlight tell the plants to take a break. With the exceptions of trees and evergreens, the plants in my yard die down to the ground when the temperature drops below freezing. It is always amazing to see large healthy plants seemingly wither and die. Yet, this is their protection mechanism. By shedding life above the ground, they protect their roots and await the coming of warmer, sunnier days.

When we cannot close out the year, it can be best to allow our efforts to diminish to where we just keep our "roots" alive. Do pain, illness, grief, dismay, discouragement, and sorrow crowd your days? Many people struggle mightily with depression at this time of the year. How do we handle loss when we cannot change the circumstances of our lives? Believe it or not, we are not the first ones to ask.

God gives us help through Spirit-inspired writings. The Bible and books of devotions and prayers can help us to find the words to express our grief when we cannot do so on our own. Another big help is to pray for a companion to walk with us through our desert. Though our grief may feel very personal, others have traveled this road and can help us find comfort and promise for our journey.

Then, step by step, the journey that seemed to be without light, help, and an end becomes something that we can do. Our fallow time has encouraged our "roots" to dig deeper into the soil of God's great love. Now we can see the hand of God supporting us and



encouraging us on our journey. And as the days grow brighter and warmer again, we can give thanks for the life that continues, now stronger and more hopeful.

I love the month of November because it gives a natural transition point to our lives. I pray that you will find the help you need as you journey through this time. And when the journey brings you to a new place, I pray that it will provide a gentle opportunity to give thanks for the help and comfort you have received. God is good. Please talk with me if you need help and resources.

Pray for peace,
Pastor Braxton ><>



On Saturday, November 18, all ladies are invited to a Christmas shopping and lunch outing. We will meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. where we will travel together in a van to different shopping centers and then to a deli for a delicious lunch.

Our December meeting will be on Saturday, December 2, at 10:00 a.m. at the church, where we will enjoy a pot luck brunch. If you were a part of Secret Sisters, we will be having our reveal party at this time.



Saturday, December 9

Free pancake breakfast
9:30 - 10:15 a.m.

Visits and photo ops with Santa & Mrs. Claus
10:15 - 11:00 a.m.

Be sure to let all your family, friends and neighbors know!



DON'T FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK ONE HOUR BEFORE GOING TO BED THIS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4!!



This year we will once again be partnering with the Salvation Army Angel Tree. Beginning Sunday, November 12, we will have angel tags available for adoption in the Narthex. This year we have 8 children and 8 Senior adults. The gifts will be due back at the church no later than Sunday, December 10.

Decorate the Church



We will be decorating the church for the Advent season on Sunday, November 26, beginning at 5:00 p.m. This is a fun family event. There will even be refreshments.



November 6 - Marcia Menard

November 8 - Braxton Cotton

November 27 - Angie Crumpton-Brown



Be sure your mark your December calendar for these upcoming events:

December 2, 10:00 a.m. - Ladies of Grace Brunch

December 9, 9:30 a.m. - Breakfast with Santa

December 24, 7:00 p.m. & 11:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve Services

December 31, 9:30 a.m. - Music Sunday



Buddy Mattox

Ellen Baker

Gary Blankenship

Larry Taylor

Leann Seale

Steve Garrett

June Moseley

Our Church

Our Country

Teachers & Students